

Internet watching the Egyptian people, Christian and Muslim alike, demand free and fair elections for the first time.

The history of the Christian church in Egypt far exceeds that of Islam. Even now, Coptic Christians make up 10 percent of Egypt's population of 80 million people.

Unfortunately, some fringe groups of extremist Muslims took this opportunity to attack their fellow Egyptians simply because they are Christians in an attempt to drive them out of Egypt. In some cases, they were successful.

Our country was founded on the principles of religious freedom. As a Christian and a Member of the House of Representatives, I'm hopeful that this example of a broad range of beliefs of our 435 Members will stand as an example to the Egyptian people.

I would ask the Egyptian people and the current military leadership to stand with the Christian minority in Egypt and ensure their ability to freely practice their faith is not impugned by the current leadership or the one that may be elected in the future.

I will continue to keep the Coptic Christians in Egypt in my prayers, and I would ask my colleagues to do the same.

YELLOWSTONE RIVER PIPELINE SPILL

(Mr. COHEN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. COHEN. Mr. Speaker, last week-end while most Americans were celebrating the Fourth of July, Montanans were, unfortunately, immersed in what has become a new American tradition: cleaning up oil spills.

After Exxon's Silvertip pipeline failed and spewed 40,000 gallons of toxic oil into the Yellowstone River, Exxon quickly labeled the incident a "freak accident"—a phrase commonly used by the oil industry after major spills. But an exhaustive history of Big Oil's spills makes it clear that these incidents are not "freak accidents" but evidence of Big Oil's neglect.

Perhaps the most blatant, recent exhibit of empty safety promises belongs to TransCanada, who dubbed the Keystone pipeline "the safest pipeline ever built." A year and 12 spills later, Keystone was shut down and deemed an "imminent threat to life, property, and the environment."

Before we permit the Keystone XL pipeline—another deadly TransCanada pipeline—we need to reauthorize our pipeline safety legislation because our pipelines need to be as consistent as Old Faithful.

ENERGY INDEPENDENCE

(Ms. FOXX asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, this last weekend we celebrated America's Inde-

pendence Day; and as I visited with constituents, they asked that we create another independence movement, independence from Middle Eastern oil, and I agree.

Unfortunately, rather than pursuing energy independence, the Obama administration keeps fostering an energy-dependence policy that costs American jobs, brings higher prices at the pump, and endangers our national security by making us more dependent on unstable Middle Eastern governments.

House Republicans have responded by introducing and passing four bills to increase our domestic energy production and create American jobs. But the Senate has taken no action. Liberal Democrats are obstructing the opportunity for jobs for Americans, lower energy costs, and a new era of independence.

It's time, Mr. Speaker, to declare independence from Middle Eastern oil and start using our own resources for the benefit of all Americans.

U.S. MILITARY INVOLVEMENT IN LIBYA

(Mr. KUCINICH asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, within the next 24 hours, the House will have the opportunity to end U.S. military involvement in Libya. And we should do so for the following reasons:

First, the war is illegal under the United States Constitution and our War Powers Act because only the U.S. Congress has the authority to declare war, and the President has been unable to show that the U.S. faced an imminent threat from Libya. The President even ignored his top legal advisers at the Pentagon and the Department of Justice, who insisted he needed congressional approval before bombing Libya.

Second, the war has reached a stalemate and is unwinnable without the deployment of NATO ground troops, effectively an invasion of Libya. The whole operation was terribly ill-considered from the beginning.

While NATO supports the Benghazi-based opposition situated in the oil rich northeast, there is little evidence that the opposition has the support of the majority of Libyans. The leading opposition group, the National Front for the Salvation of Libya, which had been reportedly backed by the CIA in the 1980s, should never have launched an armed civil war against the government if they had no chance absent a massive NATO air campaign and the introduction of NATO troops.

It's time to put an end to this war. Vote to cut off funds.

□ 1410

REPUBLICAN JOBS PLAN

(Mr. WALBERG asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. WALBERG. Mr. Speaker, rising unemployment continues to populate the headlines. An article last week by the AP points out that several cities in my State of Michigan, including Battle Creek, which I have the privilege of representing, endured big increases in unemployment. Michigan's unemployment stands at over 10 percent. The policies of this administration exacerbate bad situations. We do not need more overspending, higher taxes, rising energy costs, government takeover of health care, and more regulations.

My Republican colleagues and I have put forth a jobs plan. We know government cannot create jobs. Instead, we can support an environment where the private sector flourishes and creates jobs. Our jobs plan will reduce regulatory burdens, which are currently costing small businesses over \$10,000 per employee each year, requiring congressional approval for any regulation that has significant impact on the economy. Our jobs plan will fix the Tax Code, streamlining and lowering tax rates. Our jobs plan will encourage entrepreneurship. Our jobs plan will increase domestic energy production and will cut unsustainable spending that creates crushing burdens of debt.

At home last week, I was constantly reminded how the lack of good-paying jobs is affecting my constituents. It's truly time for America to stand up for its liberty and its next generation.

MINNESOTA GOVERNMENT SHUTDOWN

(Ms. MCCOLLUM asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. MCCOLLUM. Mr. Speaker, this week in Minnesota our State government is shut down due to a budget crisis. I want to applaud Governor Mark Dayton for negotiating in good faith, making productive compromises, and for never forgetting the needs of Minnesotans, especially our most vulnerable citizens.

The Republicans controlling the Minnesota Legislature issue ultimatums, and they want to mortgage our State's future by cutting health, education, and law enforcement. In Congress and in Minnesota, Republicans use the same playbook: First, create a crisis, put jobs at risk and the economy in peril; then ignore the needs of middle class families, and then fight to protect the interests of millionaires and billionaires.

What we are seeing in Washington and St. Paul is the radical tea party Republican extremism threatening jobs and the economy with destruction in the name of political advantage. This is a dangerous political strategy, and it needs to end now. Democrats and Republicans need to work together to solve our Nation's problems. The American people and Minnesotans expect that of their elected leaders.